

VZCZCXRO5309
OO RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHNP RUEHROV RUEHSL RUEHSR
DE RUEHC #5439/01 2572008
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 141949Z SEP 09
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 2284
INFO EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
NATO EU COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 3635
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 7720
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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE IMMEDIATE 3557
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 095439

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/09/2019

TAGS: [NATO PREL RS](#)

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE FOR NATO-RUSSIA COUNCIL PREPARATORY
COMMITTEE MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 15

REF: USNATO 348

Classified By: EUR PDAS Nancy McEldowney for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) The Mission should draw from the following guidance in response to the nonpaper delivered by Russian Ambassador Rogozin to NATO Secretary General Rasmussen on August 11, 2009 (reftel). The following points are keyed to the relevant sections of the Russian nonpaper. Begin points:

(1) Department agrees that the NRC should continue its work on the "Taking the NATO-Russia Council Forward" paper with the aim of consolidating an agreed set of priorities for practical cooperation and streamlining the NRC structure in accordance with the agreed priorities. Discussion of the paper should start with the priorities and proposed structural changes, and only discuss the broader political language once these priorities and changes to the working group structure have been agreed. An agreed paper would be a deliverable for the December ministerial.

(2) Department agrees that the Secretary General should focus on visiting Allies prior to visiting Moscow, though we have no objections to the Secretary General's meeting with Foreign Minister Lavrov in New York.

(3) Department welcomes a working-level review of cooperation within the NRC but believes this review should take place in the Preparatory Committee and Ambassadorial meetings, not in meetings between Russian and International staff.

(4) Afghanistan: The Department supports a restructuring of the NRC that reduces the total number of working groups and allows for cooperation on Afghanistan to be discussed in a thematic working group on "Operational and Defense Cooperation." Regarding Russia's participation in broader ISAF "non-troop contributors" meetings, we welcome Russian participation when such meetings are scheduled; however, we do not believe such formats should supplant regular meetings of ISAF troop contributing nations, which should remain restricted to those countries with "boots on the ground." Department supports Russia's inclusion, as appropriate, in "NATO plus Central Asian states" and believes this would be an opportunity to advance Russia's cooperation on Afghanistan and is also in keeping with the recent interagency decision to increase transparency and consultation with Russia regarding Central Asia. We are also open to discussing the expansion of the NRC counter-narcotics program. Mission should not engage substantively on the issue of possible NATO-CSTO contacts until an interagency

consensus in Washington has been reached. However, Mission may note that a review of this question within the Alliance may be timely, and that no steps should be taken in this area before Allies have carefully considered the appropriate course.

(5) Department welcomes efforts to enhance the public diplomacy of the NRC and to organize meetings of MFA Disarmament Directors of NRC member states.

(6) Department has no objections to the discussion of Russian initiatives to enhance European security in the NRC. However, the Mission should underscore our view that the OSCE should be the primary venue for such discussions, and that the U.S. values existing European security institutions and does not wish to see them diminished.

(7) Department agrees that the NATO Group of Experts should visit Moscow and welcomes Russian input as NATO begins drafting its new Strategic Concept. We highly support a mutual exchange of views on doctrine.

(8) Department supports a MOU between Russia and NAMSA.

(9) Department supports re-starting NATO-Russia cooperation in the mil-to-mil field, and welcomes Russian proposals in this regard. However, we do not want to use the 2008 Work

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Plan as a starting point, and prefer that the 2010 Work Plan be strategic in nature, with details addressed by SHAPE/ACT. Although we prefer that Russia share its position on possible areas of cooperation first, we believe the most productive would be: Afghanistan, counter-terrorism, naval operations, and an exchange views on counter-piracy and missile defense.

End points.
CLINTON